7.3 RIVERINE FLOODPLAIN

For floodplains with Base Flood Elevations, check the Flood Insurance Study to find the Flood Profile which shows water surface elevations for different frequency floods.

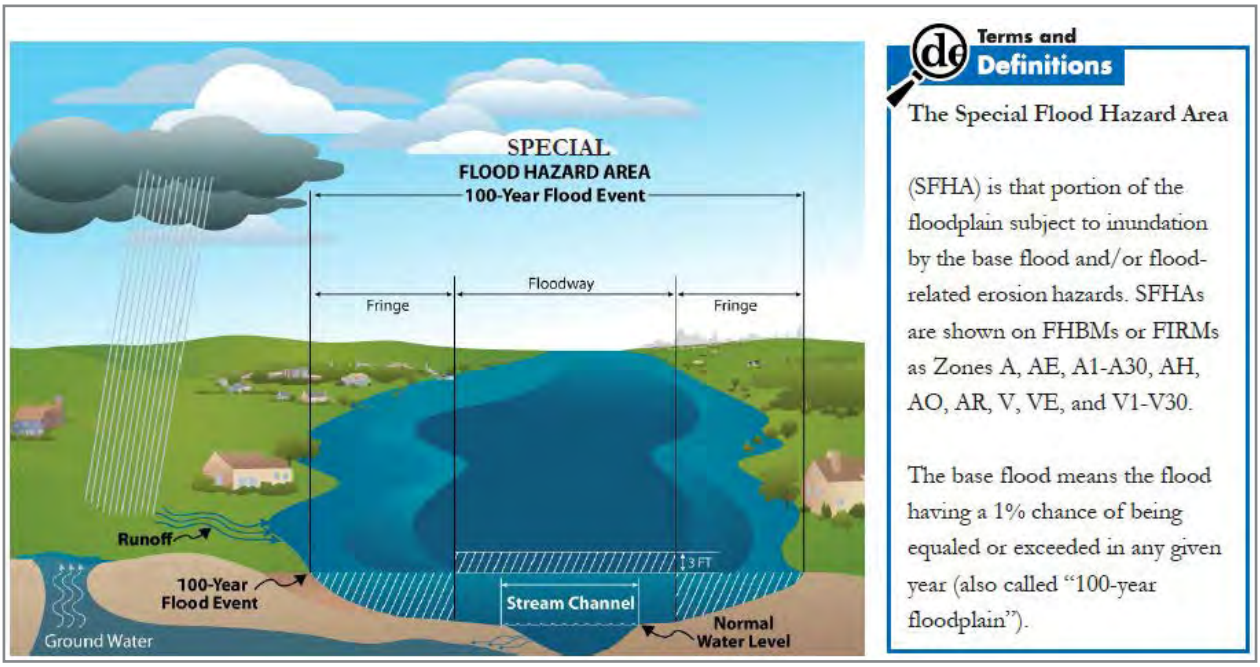


Figure 7-4: Riverine Floodplain Illustration

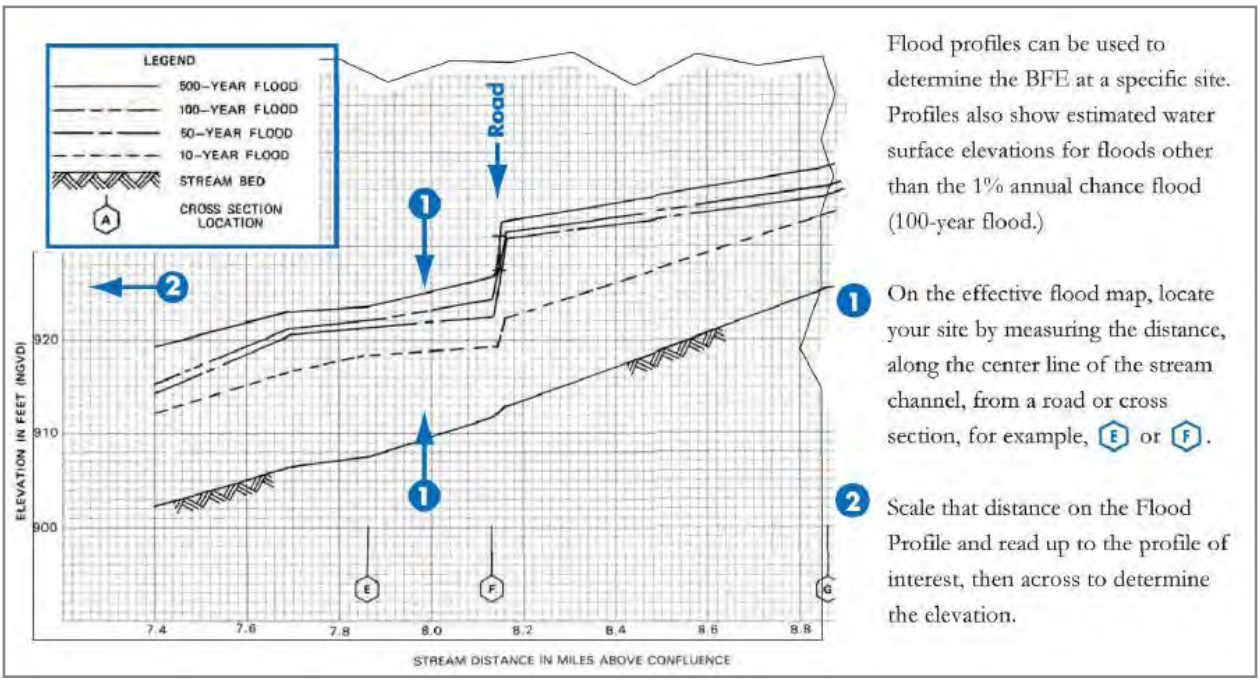
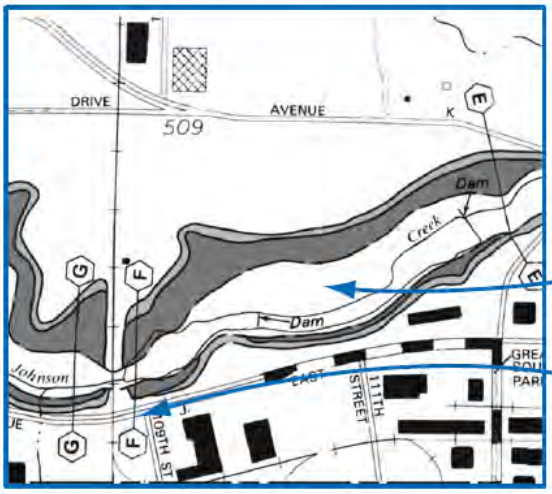


Figure 7-5: Riverine Flood Profile

FEMA prepares Floodway maps as companions to many FIRMs. Check to see if your project will be in the Floodway because additional engineering may be required.



Important Information

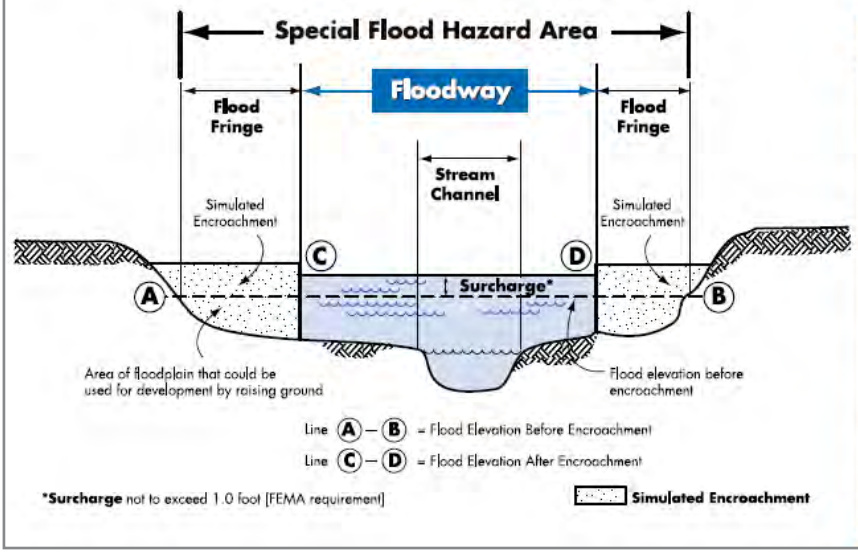
Initial floodplain maps were flood hazard boundary maps accompanied with separate floodway maps.

Floodway maps do not show flood zones or BFEs. Check the companion FIRM and FIS for that information.

1. **The Floodway** is the "white" area along the waterway.
2. **Cross Section** location, where ground surveys determined the shape of the land and how constrictions such as bridges and culverts affect the flow of floodwater.

Figure 7-6: The Riverine Flood Boundary

For any proposed floodway development, before a local floodplain permit can be issued, the applicant must provide evidence that "no rise" will occur You will need a qualified registered engineer to make sure your proposed project won't increase flooding on other properties.



Terms and Definitions

The Floodway is the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to pass the base flood discharge without increasing flood depths.

Computer models of the floodplain are used to simulate "encroachment" or fill in the flood fringe in order to predict where and how much the base flood elevation would increase if the floodplain is allowed to be filled.

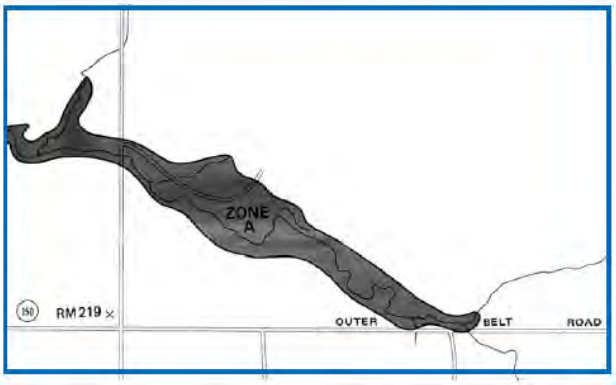
Figure 7-7: Understanding the Floodway

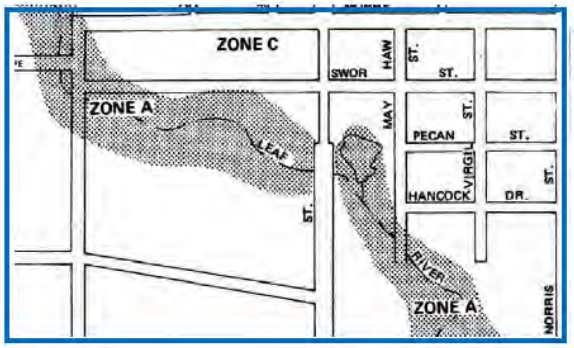
Some floodplains are delineated using approximate methods and therefore do not have specified base flood elevations (BFE). If you need help determining the BFE, check with your community permit office and/or FEMA.

FEMA publication Managing Floodplain Development in Approximate Zone A Areas (FEMA 265) is useful for engineers and community officials.

Terms and Definitions

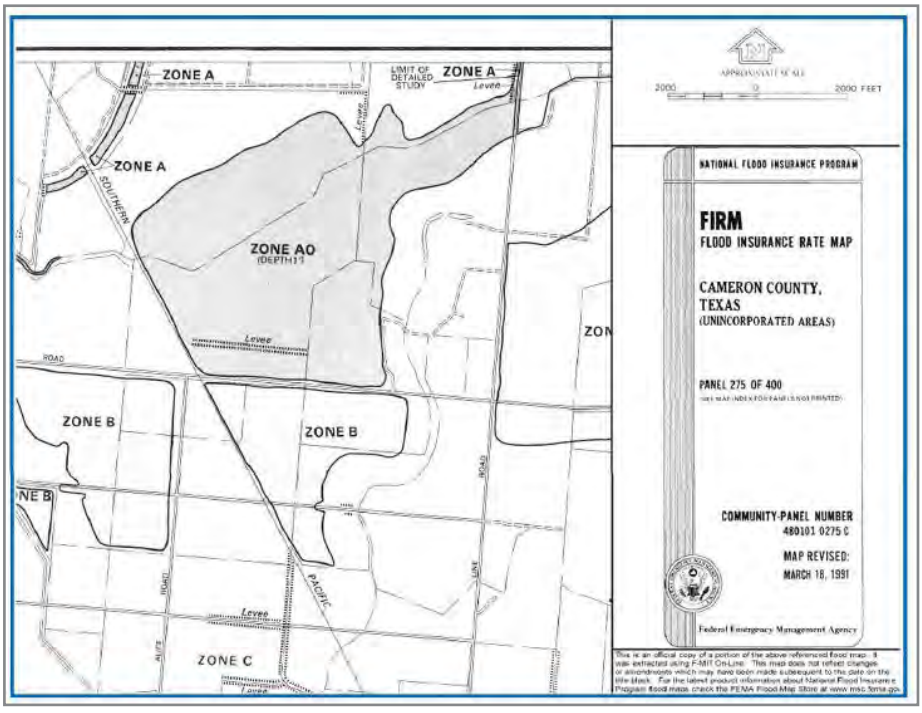
An Approximate or Unnumbered A Zone is a special flood hazard area where BFE information is not provided.





Topographic maps can be used to estimate the Base Flood Elevation if the FIRM shows approximate or unnumbered A Zones.

Figure 7-8: Approximate Flood Zones and Unnumbered A Zones



These are areas with a 1% annual chance of a shallow flood (1-3 feet of flood depth) each year.

Zone AH areas usually flood from pondin gin which water is generally not moving across the land.

Zone AO areas usually flood from sheet flow in which water moves across land where there is no defined channel.

Figure 7-9: Areas of Shallow Flooding